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ALLAN BENNE  
Speaker



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**PUBLIC COUNSEL WELCOMES ATTORNEY GENERAL  
CRIST'S ENTRY INTO FLORIDA'S ELECTRIC RATE CASES**

Florida Public Counsel Harold McLean today welcomed the entry of Attorney General Charlie Crist into two pending electric rate cases involving FP&L and Progress Energy Florida, Inc. as "a good step forward in two cases that are vital to the economic future of our state."

"I welcome the participation of Attorney General Crist in the two pending electric cases that, together, involve increases amounting to over half a billion dollars on an annual basis," stated McLean. "Florida Power & Light wants to increase its rates by over \$400 million in 2006 and Progress Energy Florida, Inc. is asking for over \$200 million in its proposal."

FP&L filed a request with the Florida Public Service Commission (FPSC) to increase its rates by \$432 million, followed by a request by McLean to reduce its basic rates by \$679 million. Progress Energy filed its request for a \$205 million rate hike that was followed by Public Counsel's proposal to reduce the existing Progress rates by \$360 million.

The FPSC has scheduled hearings in Tallahassee for August and September to consider the companies request. A final decision is expected by the Commission later this year for implementation on January 1, 2006.

In welcoming the participation of Attorney General Crist, McLean also noted that AARP, the Florida Retail Federation and the Florida Industrial Power Users Group, among others, have opposed the companies proposals and are calling for rate reductions in place of rate increases.